

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 604
By Cohen

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of U.S. District Judge
Jerome Turner of Memphis.

WHEREAS, it was with deep sadness and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly learned of the untimely death of U.S. District Judge Jerome Turner of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Jerome Turner was a distinguished and prominent citizen of the state of Tennessee who was wholly dedicated to his profession, community, and family; and

WHEREAS, Judge Turner was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a longtime resident of Shelby County, Judge Turner was a highly respected member of the Memphis community; and

WHEREAS, born and raised in Memphis, Jerome Turner was the son of Cooper Turner and Eugenia Morrison Turner; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Christian Brothers High School, Mr. Turner earned both his bachelor's degree in 1964 and his law degree in 1966 from Washington and Lee University; and

WHEREAS, Jerome Turner began his distinguished career as Judge McRae's first law clerk in 1966; twenty-two years later, Mr. Turner was appointed to his former employer's prestigious post; and

WHEREAS, Judge Turner was rendering honorable service as a private Memphis attorney in 1987 when Congressman Don Sundquist submitted his name to President Reagan for consideration of appointment to the federal judgeship; and

WHEREAS, Jerome Turner served with acumen and alacrity as one of five U.S. District Judges for the Western District of Tennessee, in which position he earned the respect and admiration of his peers for the superior quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, after assuming the bench on January 19, 1988, Judge Turner made rulings that helped shape the area's legal and political landscape; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, Judge Turner's ruling in a voting rights lawsuit eliminated the runoff provision in all citywide elections in Memphis, leading to the election of the city's first black elected mayor, Willie Herenton; and

WHEREAS, two years later, Mr. Turner presided over the second bank fraud trial of Congressman Harold Ford and was overseeing a lawsuit that challenged the Memphis School System's preference program for minority businesses when he fell ill; and

WHEREAS, Judge Jerome Turner handled cases that changed the face of Memphis politics and highlighted his philosophy of limited judicial action; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Turner's death is certainly "a loss to our system of justice...he was a judge's judge"; and

WHEREAS, the celebrated legacy Judge Turner leaves behind will be fondly remembered and greatly treasured by friends and associates for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, Jerome Turner was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Jerome was most appreciative of the loving companionship he received from his devoted wife, Kay Farese Turner, and was the proud parent of Alex Turner of St. Louis and Christian Turner of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, he will be sorely missed by his three stepchildren, Park Dodge of Holly Springs, Mississippi; Oliver Luckett of Santa Monica, California; and Whitney Luckett of Memphis, in addition to his brother, Peter Morrison Turner of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Turner leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Jerome Turner was renowned for his integrity, work ethic, and his stalwart dedication to the legal profession; his sense of justice and fairness should serve as benchmarks for all judges and attorneys to emulate; and

WHEREAS, Judge Turner was a never-ending source of inspiration to those who knew and cherished him; he was highly regarded as a professional and friend, and the perfect example of a person totally committed to the highest ideals of public service; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of U.S. District Judge Jerome Turner, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy and offer our sincere condolences to the friends and family of the Honorable Jerome Turner.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.